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INAUGURAL ADDRESS

OF

SAMUEL ABBOTT GREEN,

MAYOR OF BOSTON,

TOGETHER WITH THE ADDRESS OF

CHARLES E. PRATT,

PRESIDENT OF THE COMMON COUNCIL,

JANUARY 2, 1882.

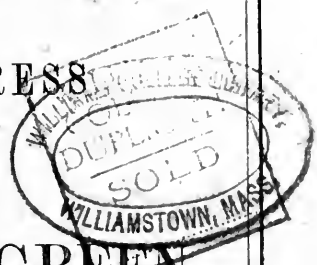


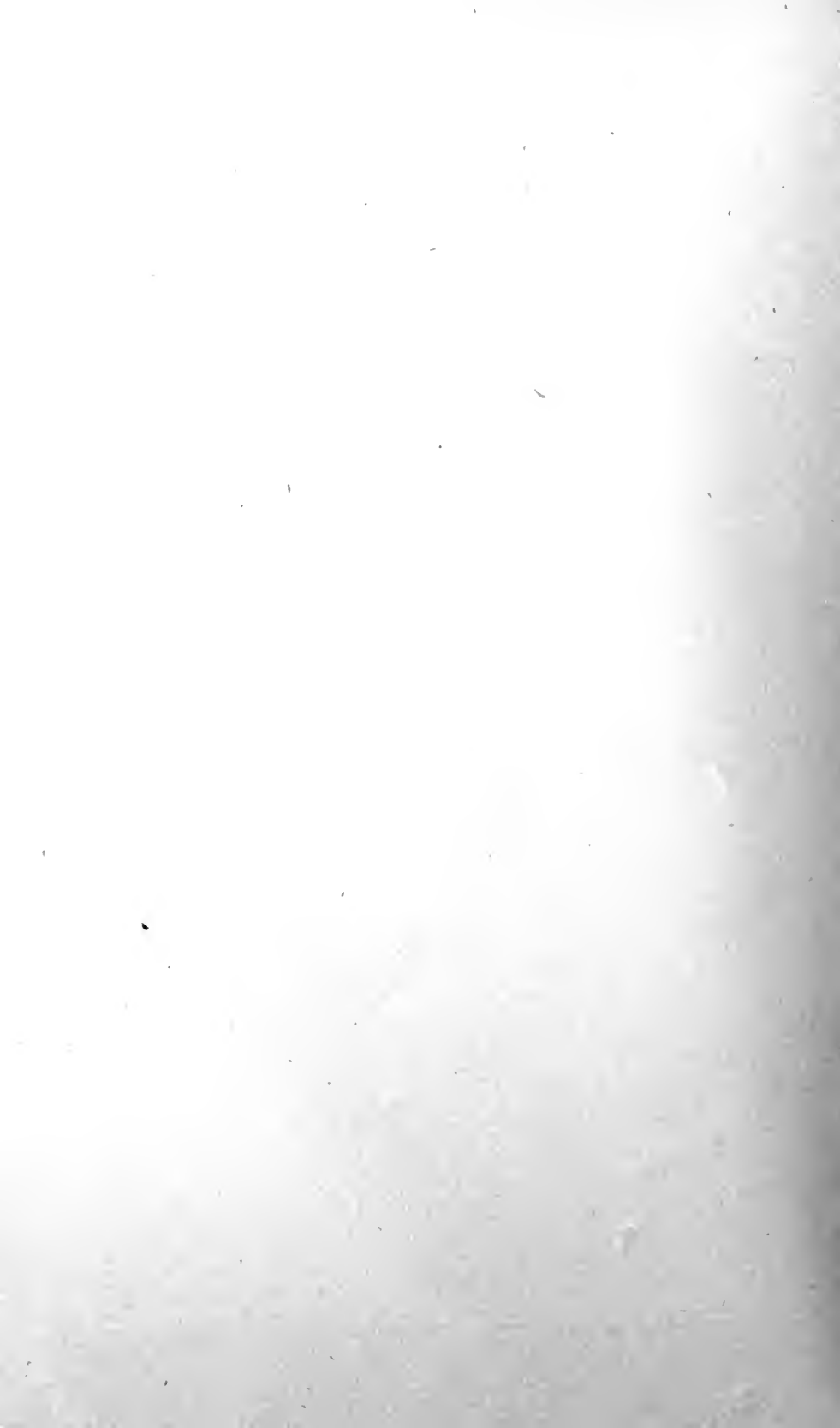
BOSTON:

ROCKWELL AND CHURCHILL, CITY PRINTERS,

No. 39 ARCH STREET.

1882.





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THE
INAUGURAL ADDRESS
OF
SAMUEL ABBOTT GREEN,
MAYOR OF BOSTON,
TO THE
CITY COUNCIL,
JANUARY 2, 1882.



BOSTON:
ROCKWELL AND CHURCHILL, CITY PRINTERS,
No. 39 ARCH STREET.
1882.

CITY OF BOSTON.

IN COMMON COUNCIL, January 2, 1882.

Ordered, That His Honor the Mayor be requested to furnish a copy of his Address, that the same may be printed.

Passed. Sent up for concurrence.

W. P. GREGG,

Clerk of the Common Council.

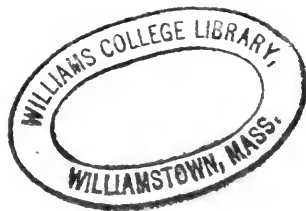
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, January 10, 1882.

Passed in concurrence.

S. F. McCLEARY,

City Clerk.

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ADDRESS.

Gentlemen of the City Council:—

A new Municipal Government is about to enter on its duties, and, in accordance with the long usage on such occasions, the Mayor delivers an inaugural address. Of late years it has been his custom to lay before the convention of the Board of Aldermen and the Common Council such suggestions and recommendations as he may see fit to make, besides giving the more important items from the reports of the several heads of departments.

With no intention to criticise the custom, it has seemed more in harmony with my own feelings to confine this address to the brief statement of a few topics. I do this the more readily, as my predecessor in office has so lately given an able review of the prominent features of a long administration; and in it he covers part of the ground which will soon claim our attention. Besides this, in an address before the last Board of Aldermen, at the end of the year, the Chairman has clearly set forth some matters having a close

connection with the business that will be brought before us. Both of these addresses are founded on long experience in municipal affairs, and contain much that is worthy of your attention. They will soon be printed and within the reach of every member of the City Government. Furthermore, the annual reports of the various chiefs of departments will appear at an early day, and be freely distributed.

These reports are drawn up with much care and fulness, and give, with all the accuracy of official authority, the details of the internal affairs of the city. Any suggestions and recommendations that I might make would necessarily be based largely on the statement of others, and I am reluctant to publish opinions taken at second hand, as my own deliberate convictions. Henceforth it will be my duty to become informed on these very points, and, in the language of the charter, "to communicate to both branches of the City Council all such information, and recommend all such measures as may tend to the improvement of the finances, the police, health, security, cleanliness, comfort, and ornament of the said city."

The condition of the city finances is of so much general interest that I enter at once upon its consideration. It is a subject of prime impor-

tance to the citizens of all classes. It fixes the rate of taxation and, in every household, affects the cost of living. The report of the Auditor of Accounts does not appear for several months to come, and for this reason I give, in some detail, a statement of the financial affairs of the city as they stood on December 31, 1881; though it does not include the large amounts recently appropriated by the votes of the City Council for public parks.

CITY DEBT.

Gross debt, December 31, 1880	\$41,103,750 60
Add permanent debt issued in 1881	39,000 00
Temporary debt of 1882	84,000 00
	<hr/>
	\$41,226,750 60
Deduct debt paid during 1881	1,208,152 58
	<hr/>
Gross debt, December 31, 1881	\$40,018,598 02
Sinking Funds, Dec. 31, 1881	\$13,938,402 07
Receipts during 1881	2,326,921 07
	<hr/>
	\$16,265,323 14
Payments during 1881	1,209,257 41
	<hr/>
	\$15,056,065 73
Bonds and mortgages, the pay- ments on which are pledged to the payment of debt	714,485 69
	<hr/>
Total redemption means, December 31, 1881	15,770,551 42
	<hr/>
Net debt, December 31, 1881	<u>\$24,248,046 60</u>

Gross debt, December 31, 1880	\$41,103,750 60
“ “ “ 31, 1881	40,018,598 02

Decrease	<u>\$1,085,152 08</u>
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Net debt, December 31, 1880	\$26,658,456 41
“ “ “ 31, 1881	24,248,046 60

Decrease	<u>\$2,410,409 81</u>
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City debt, including balances of debt assumed by

acts of annexation	\$27,260,324 04
Cochituate Water debt	11,631,273 98
Mystic Water debt	1,127,000 00
	<u>\$40,018,598 02</u>

Loans authorized but not issued —

By City Council of 1877.

For improved sewerage	\$981,000 00
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By City Council of 1881.

For additional supply of water	\$324,000 00
Widening Portland street	300,000 00
“ South street	185,000 00
“ Kneeland street	180,000 00
West Roxbury Park	600,000 00
City Point “	100,000 00
East Boston “	50,000 00
Charles river embankment	300,000 00
Muddy river improvement	200,000 00
Arnold Arboretum	60,000 00
Additional land, Public Library,	150,000 00
	<u>2,449,000 00</u>
	<u>\$3,430,000 00</u>

By the action of the City Council at the end of last year, Boston is committed to a system of public parks. During several years the subject has been thoroughly discussed, both in public and in private, and the only argument urged against it was the cost. Nearly every large city in this country or in Europe has its park, or series of parks, and Boston will soon stand abreast of them. There are many sanitary reasons in favor of the system, and whatever favors sound health leads to good morals. Tending in the same direction are other arguments which I will not specify. If we have the needful means, it is enough for us to know that such improvements are demanded by the public. At the same time the tax-payers have a right to hold their servants to a strict account of the manner in which the appropriations for the object are spent. I am fully aware that this action of the last City Council does not closely concern us now, but a caution in regard to the expenditure of money is always timely. Fortunately nature has done so much for this wide-spread territory that there is little need of a great outlay at once, and the more expensive improvements can be put off without detriment to the public interests. By the terms of the vote authorizing the establishment

of the parks, the land will be placed under the charge of the Park Commissioners; and the city may well congratulate itself that it has three citizens who enjoy the entire confidence of the community, and, at the same time, are willing, without salary, to assume the care and responsibility of this high trust. I have referred to the matter because other appropriations will be required for this object, and during a period when large sums of money are voted for public purposes there is a tendency to grow careless of the economical use of it. The average mind becomes accustomed to unusual amounts, and money is often spent without due foresight.

It may be well to remind you that, in the course of a few years, a large part of the Franklin Fund will be available by the city for a purpose kindred to public parks. Dr. Benjamin Franklin died in the year 1790, bequeathing to his native town of Boston one thousand pounds, to be lent to young married artificers, upon certain conditions; and he expected that this sum, in one hundred years, would increase to a very large amount. It was his wish, as expressed in his will, that, at the end of this time, one hundred thousand pounds should be spent upon "public works which may be judged of most general utility to the inhabitants, such

as fortifications, bridges, aqueducts, public buildings, baths, pavements, or whatever may make living in the town more convenient to its people, and render it more agreeable to strangers resorting thither for health or a temporary residence." Applying this money toward the embellishment of Boston, under certain conditions, would certainly be in accordance with the expressed desire of Franklin, and would leave the way clear to give the name of the great printer, philosopher, and statesman to one of the new parks. In no other way could the bequest be made to subserve so well the convenience of the whole people.

Your attention is earnestly called to the public schools. No subject will be brought to your notice, of greater interest to the citizens, or of more vital importance. Education is the very bulwark of our political liberties. There is no power so actively at work in welding together the tastes, instincts and feelings of the whole people, without regard to social distinctions, as our system of public instruction; and with the growth of our city in population and material prosperity, it becomes a matter of increasing importance to cherish every institution which shall tend to enlarge the interests and sympathies common to the entire community. Through her whole history

Boston has been liberal toward her schools, and the tax-payers are always willing that the necessary appropriations should be made in order to support them.

According to the school census of May last the number of children in the city, between five and fifteen years of age, was sixty-one thousand and fifty-six; and of this number forty-seven thousand seven hundred and thirty-two were taught in the public schools, and six thousand nine hundred and twenty-two in private schools. In June last the following schools were supported by the city:—one Normal, ten Latin and High, fifty Grammar and four hundred and eighteen Primary schools. Besides these there were what are termed the special schools, comprising an evening high school, a school for deaf-mutes, two schools for licensed minors, six evening drawing schools, and seventeen evening schools. The average number of pupils attending these special classes was three thousand one hundred and fifty-three. These different schools, general and special, required a force of twelve hundred and seventy-six teachers, of whom one hundred and ninety-eight were men, and one thousand and seventy-eight were women.

The appropriations made by the City Council

for public schools during the present financial year amounted to \$1,415,760. The expenditure of the year, thus far, as compared with that of the corresponding nine months of last year, shows a decrease of \$18,608.34. It is a gratifying fact to note that the expenses of the schools of late have been steadily decreasing, although the number of pupils has increased at the rate of over one thousand each year.

A fit supplement to the question of schools is the Public Library, and I would earnestly bespeak your careful attention to its needs. It is to-day the largest library in the country, and its use increases with its growth. Our system of public education culminates wisely in an institution of this kind.

There are various other subjects connected with the municipal government, which I omit to mention; though it is not because I fail to appreciate their importance. In the natural course of official duties your attention will soon be called to them, and they will receive, I doubt not, your careful consideration.

Gentlemen of the City Council:—Our work is now begun. Let us show by our actions, rather than by our words, that we appreciate the high

responsibility resting on us. Let us do our duty without regard to party or faction, and with sole reference to the good of the city. If we enter upon our labors in this spirit, we may well leave the result to a kind Providence.



ADDRESS
OF
CHARLES E. PRATT,
PRESIDENT,
TO THE
COMMON COUNCIL,

JANUARY 2, 1882.



BOSTON:
ROCKWELL AND CHURCHILL, CITY PRINTERS,
No. 39 ARCH STREET.
1882.



CITY OF BOSTON.

IN COMMON COUNCIL, January 12, 1882.

On motion of Mr. Smith, —

Ordered, That the President of the Common Council be requested to furnish a copy of his address, to be printed with the address of His Honor the Mayor.

Attest :

W. P. GREGG,
Clerk of the Common Council.



ADDRESS.

Gentlemen of the Common Council: —

On taking the chair to which your unanimous vote has just elected me, as fortieth President of the Common Council of the City of Boston, and for the sixty-first term of that office, I am impressed with the dignity of the body over which I am to preside, and the gravity of the duties we are all here to perform.

The magnitude of the interests of the City of Boston is such as to require a considerable knowledge and familiarity with them to enable one to appreciate it. In the sixty years since the granting of our municipal charter, the population of the city has increased from about 44,000 (or, including the districts which have since been annexed, from about 59,000) to about 363,000 inhabitants. The total valuation of property within the city limits, and directly affected by our legislation, is about \$749,000,000. The city assets are about \$56,000,000, and the annual tax levy is about \$9,000,000. So vast are the figures; the number of departments and the

variety of details of management are of corresponding magnitude.

We are here, seventy-two of us, as directors of this immense corporation; each one of us representing, were our responsibility divided, more than 5,000 of the stockholders, and more than \$10,000,000 of the capital stock. It is true that we share this responsibility with the other branch of the city government; but, since in all graver things, and especially in the aggregates of expenditure, our action must be either original or concurrent, we cannot, except in some matters of administration, avoid the directness of this responsibility.

The honorable roll of those who have preceded us in office during the past sixty years may also impress us with the necessity of faithful, diligent, earnest attention to our duties, if we would earn and perpetuate, as they have, positions and reputations for honest, efficient stewardship.

It has sometimes, of late years, been remarked that the affairs of the City of Boston should be conducted upon business principles,—that members of the City Government should transact city business as they would their own. I think you will follow me in going a step further, and saying we are not free even to transact city

affairs quite as venturesomely as we would our own; but we are to look after its concerns, apportion the ever heavy annual assessment, and attend to the expenditure of revenue, as if we were trustees, and with the same degree of prudence and conservatism as we should observe in handling trust funds.

To provide prudently for current city expenses; to continue improvements already begun, and wisely to devise whatever may be practicable for the increase of the mercantile, commercial, and manufacturing advantages of the city, and render it more beautiful as a place of residence; to see that the affairs of the city are administered with efficiency and economy; to diminish the public debt; to reduce or to keep within reasonable limit the rate of taxation; to protect and brighten the fair fame of the city, — these are the objects for the accomplishment of which we have been elected. These are the duties to which we address ourselves on this day of inauguration.

Of the matters likely to claim the especial attention of this City Council, I shall not attempt to speak seriatim, because nearly two-thirds of you have had previous experience here, and a familiarity with them perhaps greater than my own.

That so large a proportion of your number

have served here before is a matter for congratulation both to you and to the city. To those who enter to-day for the first time upon municipal work, a few suggestions from me may not be out of place.

Important as is punctual and assiduous attention to the business of our stated meetings, it will be found, I think, by all that the most laborious; and often the most important, service to the city is rendered in committees; and that the satisfactory, or even the necessary, understanding of the multitudinous matters upon which you are to act in council assembled, will require a great deal of patient, persistent, and well-directed attention and study, at other times and in other places. You will learn, as the weeks go by, to pay more respect to committee work and committee reports. You will find that it is impossible for one to acquaint himself with, and to follow, all departments and all projects of the city business; although in the several departments to which he may pay especial regard he may become expert. And so it is that as you learn confidence in your fellow-members, and become aware of your own inadequate knowledge, you will pay mutual deference and accept the results of each other's work.

As to the conduct of business, allow me to make a suggestion or two. Directness rather than eloquence of speech is effective. To allow one who has charge of a measure, as chairman of a committee or otherwise, the benefit of the presumption that he has considered the matter, and knows better how to manage it than one who has had less to do with it, is good policy, unless unqualified opposition is intended. "Too many cooks spoil the broth" is true in parliamentary tactics as elsewhere.

Another good rule is to transact each day the day's business. The custom that has sometimes prevailed, of passing over debatable matters for the time, and the parallel one of special assignments, do not in my judgment conduce to the better transaction of business ; but they do work the consumption of time, the occurrence of late sessions, and of other ill conditions of procrastination.

On the other hand, the suspension of the rules, in order to take up business out of its regular course, has sometimes been carried to a degree of excess which has worked equal detriment to the transaction of business. It is seldom that with prompt, attentive, and practical application to the business of the day, the whole cannot be taken up in its regular order, and accom-

plished without the waste of time involved in unnecessary motions and repeated handling of the same papers.

The rules and orders of this Common Council, and the joint rules and orders of the City Council, have grown to be somewhat complex and technical. It is the duty, not only of your presiding officer, but of all who wish to take an intelligent part in the action of the Council on the floor, to become familiar with their provisions, and to be able at any time and with any subject, not only to understand its progress from stage to stage and the effect of any vote, but to be able to direct the progress of matters so as to expedite business and to accomplish the object sought.

On one little matter let us take counsel together. Not because the public are looking at us, but because it is right, let us carefully consider our incidental and contingent expenditures. If, in the discharge of official duty, we are obliged to incur expense for carriages and refreshments, we may follow the unwritten law of the municipality by charging them to the city; and, so long as they are reasonable and necessary, neither our constituents nor our consciences will reprove us for the charges. But the good

Councilman will be scrupulously careful in little things as well as in large. He will remember that unnecessary and unreasonable indulgence at the city expense is not merely pilfering—it is embezzlement. He will bear in mind that every dollar of our appropriations is a compulsory exaction, and was earned by the toil and worry of our fellow-citizens.

I make the suggestions rather to invite your own reflection than to attempt any complete presentment of your duties. To comprehend the matters to be dealt with, and then to understand the method of dealing with them, will not only invite, but will repay, your earnest attention.

I may be pardoned for alluding to what appears to me to be a considerable and desirable growth of cosmopolitanism in the City Council of Boston. Composed, as our city is, of districts formerly separate, but now united, and interwoven as the interests of each section are with those of every other, it is well that members of the Common Council are mindful that they represent the city, and not sections of it; that they endeavor to perform their duties in a manner consonant with a comprehensive business policy, and not deranged by personal preferences, or merely local consideration.

Gentlemen, for the honor which you have conferred in this election, I thank you sincerely for so much of it as is personal, and I accept, with somewhat of genuine diffidence and consciousness of inability, so much of it as pertains impersonally to the office. It is peculiarly gratifying to me, that, in my nomination and election, for the second time, to this office, there has been no contributory political partisanship, and no asperity of personal differences. It is auspicious for the harmony of our associations for the coming year.

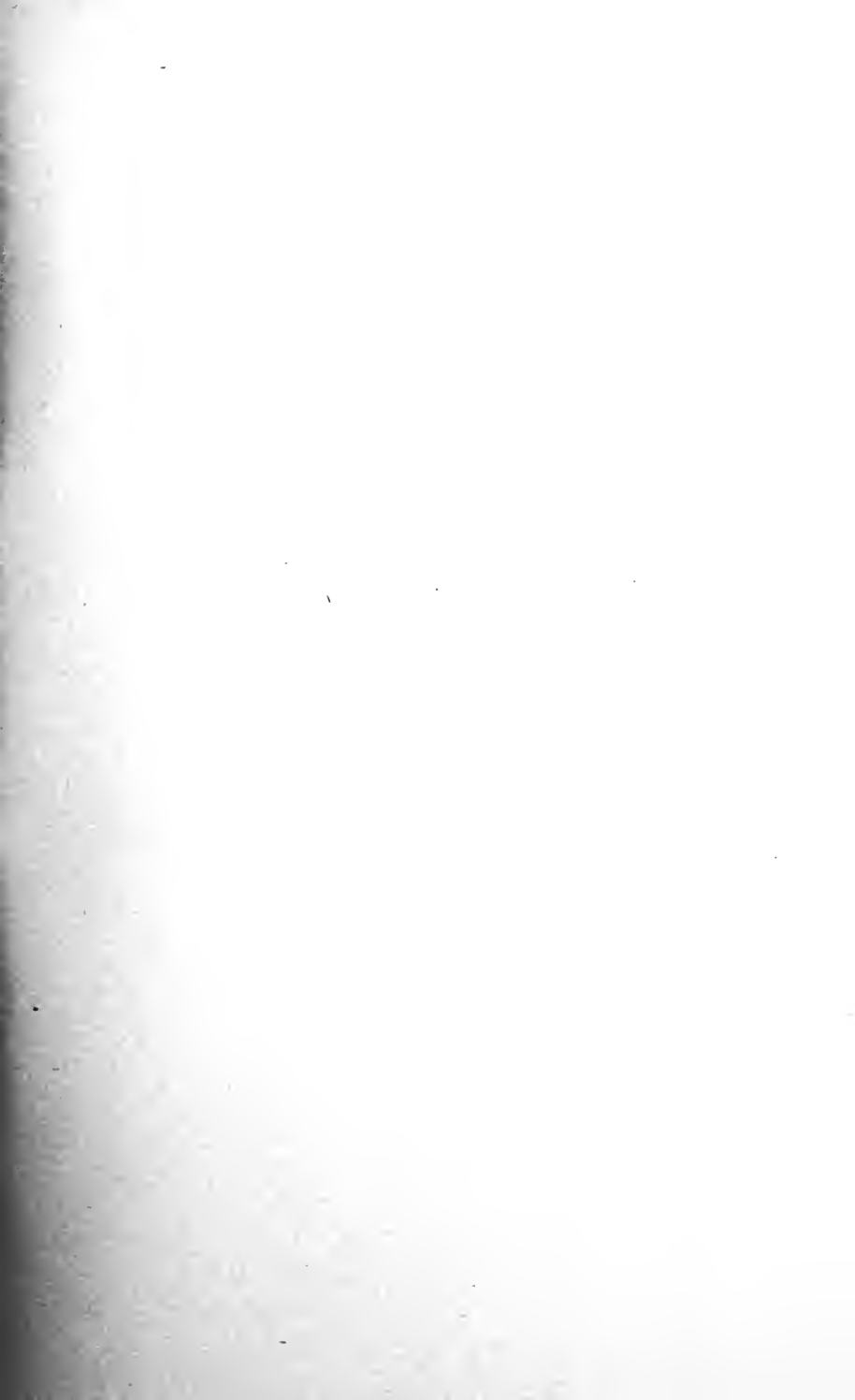
In the responsible matter of appointment of committees, I am able to say with truthfulness that I am under neither pledge nor promise, and that I have no personal preferences to indulge. I shall endeavor to distribute these appointments so as best to divide the work for the interests of the city and its departments, to the members best qualified by previous experience, by occupation, or by otherwise acquired familiarity and interest in the subjects to be considered.

In presiding over your deliberations, I shall endeavor to promote accurate, rapid, methodical despatch of business, and uniformity and impartiality in observance and enforcement of the rules.

In the discharge of my duties I invite your confidence and coöperation, as in the discharge of yours I shall be ready to give my own to you, so far as I am able. It would be impossible for me to serve you as I ought without your suggestions and cordial aid; and I beg you to bear in mind that an ounce of suggestion beforehand is worth a pound of censure afterwards.

This is a time, standing as we are upon the threshold of arduous duties, for condolence rather than for felicitation. Far happier are they who lay down the armor than those who buckle it on. And yet, knowing well the pleasant associations which we may enjoy, and the pleasures which follow and even accompany worthy accomplishments, I congratulate you in advance upon an auspicious year.





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